

Message Text

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PAGE 01 QUITO 03038 110333Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04
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FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, EC
SUBJECT: NATIONWIDE GENERAL STRIKE

1. THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE ECUADOREAN CONFEDERATION OF FREE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS (CEOSL) APPROVED MAY 7 PARTICIPATION IN A 24-HOUR NATIONWIDE GENERAL STRIKE ON MAY 18, IN COOPERATION WITH THE OTHER TWO NATION LABOR CONFEDERATIONS, THE CTE AND THE MARXIST WING OF CEDOC. THE CTE IS COMMUNIST (WFTU AFFILIATED).

2. THE STRIKE IS INTENDED TO BE A REPEAT OF THE FIRST GENERAL STRIKE HELD NOVEMBER 13, 1975 AND THE NEW STRIKE MANIFESTO CONTAINS THE SAME POINTS ORIGINALLY SET OUT IN 1975; SALARY INCREASES, DEROGATION OF THE SO-CALLED ANTI LABOR DECREES, IMMEDIATE RESOLUTION OF OUTSTANDING LABOR DISPUTES, AGRARIAN REFORM, REORGANIZATION OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOR, NATIONALIZATION OF PETROLEUM, THE ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY AND FOREIGN COMMERCE AND A FREEZING OF CONSUMER PRICES.

3. THE 1975 STRIKE WAS PEACEFUL AND ENDED UP VIRTUALLY BEING A NATIONAL HOLIDAY. APPARENTLY THE GOE HOPES TO REPEAT THE EARLIER PERFORMANCE AND IS AVOIDING ANY SPECIFIC ACTION (I.E. EXPELLING THE WORKERS ILLEGALLY OCCUPYING THE
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TANASA CIGARETTE FACTORY) THAT WOULD RESULT IN CREATING VIOLENT ANTI-GOVERNMENT ATTITUDES DEVELOPING AMONG THE LABOR UNIONS.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE STRIKE IS NOW OFFICIALLY SCHEDULED, THERE IS STILL SOME SKEPTICISM AMONG LABOR LEADERS THAT IT WILL ACTUALLY TAKE PLACE. THE 1975 STRIKE WAS SUCCESSFUL IN THAT

IT CLOSED DOWN THE COUNTRY FOR A FULL DAY, BUT UNSUCCESSFUL IN THAT NOT A SINGLE POINT OF THE STRIKE MANIFESTO WAS ACHIEVED. PART OF THE SUCCESS CAME FROM THE FACT THAT THE TRANSPORT WORKERS (BUS, TRUCK AND TAXI OPERATORS), ALTHOUGH NOT OFFICIALLY PARTICIPATING IN THE STRIKE, STAYED OFF THE STREETS BECAUSE OF THE FEAR THAT PARTICIPATING STUDENTS WOULD ATTACK THEIR VEHICLES. THE TRANSPORTATION WORKERS ARE NOT PARTICIPATING IN THE STRIKE THIS YEAR EITHER, BUT THEY MAY ONCE AGAIN BE SUCCESSFULLY INTIMIDATED BY STUDENTS AND THE STRIKE'S LABOR SPONSORS. THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT THE GOE IS READY TO CONCEDE ANY POINTS TO THE STRIKERS THIS TIME EITHER, SO THE STRIKE IS LIKELY TO FAIL TO ACHIEVE ANY SIGNIFICANT FORWARD PROGRESS IN LABOR'S DEMANDS.
BLOOMFIELD

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Message Attributes

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